

## Area Overview

### Grants Mining District Grants, New Mexico

April 2017

#### This Fact Sheet will tell you about...

- Current area activities
- Area background
- For more information

#### Current actions in the GMD

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Department of Agriculture, New Mexico Environmental Department (NMED), New Mexico Mining and Minerals Division (NMMMD) and the New Mexico Department of Health are working to address radiological contamination throughout the Grants Mining District (GMD).

EPA has completed initial assessments of surface contamination at mines to prioritize future work.

Results from the EPA's Phase 1 groundwater study for the area were made public online and during multiple community meetings in the Grants, New Mexico, area in November 2016. Those presentations are available online at <https://www.epa.gov/grants-mining-district>.

#### Site Background

The Grants Mining District comprises an area of 100 miles by 25 miles in northwest New Mexico where uranium extraction and production activities occurred from the 1950s to the late 1980s. The Atomic Energy Commission was the sole purchaser of yellowcake produced from the 1940's through 1970. Over 52 million tons of uranium ore were extracted from these mines, constituting approximately 68% of the total uranium ore mined in the United States during this period.

The GMD contains 97 mines and there are 33 legacy mines without known liable/viable potentially responsible parties to contribute to the assessment and cleanup of those mines.

EPA Region 6, with assistance from the NMED and

the U.S. Geological Survey, initiated a phased groundwater investigation for the San Mateo Creek basin as part of an Expanded Site Inspection (ESI) to assess the nature and extent of contamination in the alluvial aquifer related to legacy uranium mining and milling. The results from Phase 1 were released November 2016. Phase 2 is currently underway.

EPA Region 6 has assessed 900 structures and properties of which 128 found to have radon levels above action levels were cleaned up.

#### For more information, please contact...

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Inquiries from the news media should be directed to the EPA Region 6 Press Office at 214.665.2200.

The primary GMD Information Repository, which contains information about Site activities, has been established at New Mexico State University.

#### Additional background information about this site can found online at:

<https://www.epa.gov/grants-mining-district>

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